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TAGS: [PREL](#) [KO](#) [LO](#)  
SUBJECT: PESSIMISM ON KOSOVO

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission Lawrence R. Silverman for reason  
1.4 b and d.

(C) Summary: PolDir Miroslav Lajcak summoned "Quint" representatives to the MFA to share concerns that the Contact Group may be losing control of the Kosovo process and his fear that Russia will veto a UNSC resolution on final status. Slovakia fully supports Ahtisaari's work, but Lajcak is concerned that Ahtisaari will not have an audience to which to present his plan in Belgrade after the elections. Lajcak suggested that the international community may need to think about alterations. Lajcak was obviously spooked by his conversation with the Russian Ambassador in Belgrade; time will tell if the Russian's threats were real policy or merely scare tactics. Lajcak understands that others including the USG do not think Moscow will veto a resolution. He hopes he is wrong and they are right.

12. (C) A dour MFA PolDir Miroslav Lajcak convened the Ambassadors/Charges of the "Quint" on November 27 to provide his very pessimistic assessment of the status and future of the Kosovo process, based on his recent meetings in Belgrade and Pristina and a November 24 dinner with Martti Ahtisaari in Bratislava. Lajcak did not propose an alternative strategy, but emphasized that the Contact Group has already lost control of the process and had to think of changes to strategy and tactics if it were to regain control. Lajcak said his pessimism was based in large part on his assessment, which he acknowledged did not accord with that of the USG or other governments, that Moscow would veto any UNSCR. While Ahtisaari believes he can present his plan in Belgrade around January 30 after the elections, Lajcak thinks that the leadership in Belgrade will not accept a visit. In this case, Ahtisaari quipped to Lajcak and FM Kubis, he would send it by DHL. Internal EU disunity is another key reason for Lajcak's pessimism. Ahtisaari told the Slovaks 11/24 that he was worried that the Quint was silent, and that opposition to independence was noisier. He said he would like to see greater Quint activism.

13. (C) Elaborating, Lajcak no longer believes there is a window of opportunity between the January 21 elections and the seating of a new government to present the Ahtisaari proposals. There would be no legitimate parliament, and no caretaker would be willing to accept responsibility. With no parliament to back him, President Tadic would not be willing to receive the report. The alternative would be to table a UNSC resolution between the elections and a new government taking power, but Russia and Belgrade would present moral arguments for why such a momentous issue should be presented only after a new government is in power. Lajcak found the Serbian government confident of their hand, and said that advisors to Tadic with whom he spoke did not really provide greater light than did those to Kostunica. The Serbs were

expecting further delays in the report and suggested to Lajcak that everyone consider 2007 as a year of negotiation. As for Belgrade's negotiating stance, they described their vision to Lajcak: Kosovo not part of the UN; Belgrade controls foreign policy and borders; parallel contacts between Kosovar Serb municipalities and Belgrade (already in plan); possible review of arrangement after 5-6 years. Lajcak said he knew Pristina would never accept this.

¶4. (C) Likewise, Lajcak thinks Ahtisaari is expecting that the "political" arguments of his report will be more persuasive than will be the case. Lajcak does not believe warnings of a return to the 1990's absent a UNSC resolution will sway either Belgrade or Moscow.

¶5. (C) While others think Moscow would abstain on a UNSCR, Lajcak has been led by Moscow's Ambassador in Belgrade to think that only a veto would serve Moscow's interest. Lajcak bluntly warned that the international community needed to "wake up" to the fact this is not the same Russia the West has been dealing with in past years, citing its behavior in Georgia as an example. Russia wants to show that no global issue can be solved without its input, and believes that the lack of a solution sets a helpful precedent for other frozen conflicts. Moscow probably thinks very few nations would recognize a unilateral declaration of independence by Pristina. The Russian Ambassador to Belgrade told Lajcak the GOR has made its views far too public to back down and abstain on a resolution. Doing so would involve Moscow sharing responsibility for a bad international decision.

¶6. (C) The bottom line: Lajcak fears that if Pristina says yes to independence and Mitrovica no, the stage will be set for partition. He could not rule out the Serbs sending police forces there per UNSCR 1244. It's a far-out scenario, he admitted, but not impossible.

¶7. (C) As for Lajcak's ideas for next steps, he said we needed to think about alternative scenarios. FM Kubis does not want to change plans or the GOS position, but the Slovaks are wondering whether alterations to the plan for instruments of sovereignty could provide for greater international involvement, thereby improving prospects for broader acceptance. In the meantime, Lajcak will invite the Visegrad 4, Austria and Luxembourg to Bratislava this week. UN Deputy Special Envoy Rohan will attend as well. Lajcak urged contact by all with the Spanish and Romanians, although he thought that we could be naive to think either would change its position. Lajcak discussed with Ambassador Polt our view that there should be a UNSCR even without the support of all EU members.

¶8. (C) Comment: Lajcak knows he is in a minority in thinking Russia will veto a UNSCR. He strongly hopes we are right and he is wrong. He was definitely spooked by the statements of the Russian Ambassador in Belgrade; time will tell if those statements were genuine reflections of policy or a kind of scare tactic. He engaged us because Slovakia continues to fully support Ahtisaari's work, and does not want the international community's efforts to be undermined by Russia.

VALLEE